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Administrator,

Our colleagues in RTP, NC and Athens, GA are continuing to prepare today for Hurricane Florence. In addition, ORD's OMB budget briefing is scheduled for September 19th and we are working to prepare for that.

Hot issues

State Engagement

This week ORD participated in the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual (AFWA) Meeting. AFWA represents state and federal fish, wildlife and natural resource agencies to advance science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats. The Association represents its members on Capitol Hill and before the Administration and provide member agencies on programs that range from birds, fish habitat and energy development to climate change, conservation education, leadership training and international relations. ORD staff met with the AFWA President, select state agency directors and the Deputy Director and staff of the Florida Fish, Wildlife and Marine Research Institute. It was a very productive meeting, participants were enthusiastic about our interest in collaborating. As a next step, we will identify how we can work together to share research and how ORD's research can further assist with the needs of state agencies.

Winners of Wildland Fire Sensor Challenge Announced

ORD announced the winners of the Wildland Fire Sensors Challenge yesterday at the Air Sensors International Conference in Oakland, Calif. The winning prototypes, selected by EPA and federal partners, underwent rigorous laboratory testing by EPA and the U.S. Forest Service. The first place winners (\$35,000) are Jason Gu and Bryan Tomko of SenSevere/Sensit Technologies in Pittsburgh, PA, and R. Subramanian of Carnegie Mellon University. Second place (\$25,000) was awarded to Scott Waller and Andrew Smallridge of Thingy LLC in Bellevue, Wash. Javier Fernandez of Kunak Technologies of Pamplona, Spain received an Honorable Mention. The competition is accelerating the development of monitoring technology to measure air pollutants from smoke during wildland fires that is portable, durable, reliable and wireless. A [video](#) and [webpage](#) have been created to share the announcement of the awards.

PFAS Support

On September 11-12, ORD met with staff from Region 1, OAR and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services in Concord, NH, to review ORD findings from evaluating PFAS contamination in Merrimack, NH. On September 13, Regina Poeske (Region 3 RSL), Tim Buckley, Andy Lindstrom, Mark Strynar (NERL), Jeff Ryan (NRMRL) and staff from Region 3 will meet with representatives from West Virginia and the Chemours Chemical Company to discuss air samples collected from a Chemours facility in August. ORD is analyzing the samples for PFAS compounds.

Upcoming Major Decisions and events

Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council Meeting

On September 18-19, ORD will attend the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council's (ITRC) Board meeting at Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality in Richmond. ITRC is a subgroup of the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS), working to advance the use of innovative environmental technologies and approaches. Agenda topics include: lessons learned from 2018 ITRC teams, 2019 teams & products, strategic planning, ERIS by-laws discussion, and training for Board members.